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A

DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED ON

THE FAST DAY

RECOMMENDED BY THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY JOHN M. DUNCAN,

PASTOR OF THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CONGREGATION OF BALTIMORE.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

BALTIMORE:

CUSHING & BROTHER,

206, MARKET STREET.

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ROBERT NEILSON,

N. E. CORNER OF BALTIMORE AND CHARLES STREETS.

DISCOURSE.

Psalm xxxiii. 12.—Blessed is the NATION whose God (ELOHIM—MAGISTRATE) is Jehovah; and the PEOPLE whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

WE have been called into the sanctuary to-day—not by any specific ordinance of the Most High; not by the summons of an ecclesiastical sect; nor even by the authoritative requisition of our city or state corporations—but because a deep working sympathy is pervading all parties of this great community, and compelling them to respond to each other in tones of grief. The nation assembles to mourn a departed CHIEF. Circumstances, strongly marked, and distressing to all, have occurred, revolving around a death-bed scene in the nation's mansion—throwing the public mind back on a fearfully tumultuous scene, and forward in appalling augury of future events—and, at the call of him whom Providence has now placed in the chair of state, we have come to weep before the righteous and omniscient God. This seems to be required on the presumption that we have done, and may still be doing, much which is wrong in his sight. The voice of conscience speaks; and, tracing our affliction back to sin we have committed, compels to humble meditation, and proposes no relief but in earnest prayer. Our chief magistrate feels it to be right we should thus appear in the courts of the Lord; and the millions of our land approve and consent.

In this mournful ceremony, you call upon the ministry of reconciliation, with all their priestly sympathies, to attend you to the altar, to take the lead in your meditations, and to intercede for forgiving mercy. But you have thoughts of your own; and perhaps you have come here with opinions already firmly settled. What then do you expect from us? Some common place sentences, clothed in gorgeous phrase? or some dulcet strains of chaste and popular eulogy? Or will you allow some clear toned remonstrances? some indignant rebuke for the past? some high souled warning for the future? Can you honestly and seriously permit us, to state the elemental principles of social organization, which the Eternal has incorporated in his covenant with man?—Will you listen without restlessness and rebuke, if we note the declining influence of those principles? Will you cheerfully follow us, if we call you to political thinking of higher attributes than belong to that in which party purposes may have trained you? and to political action, graced by that mediatorial loveliness from which party contention has estranged you? If you consider the official recommendation, by which we have been convened, to invite us to this last difficult and responsible task, will you, without taking offence where no offence is intended, respond to us in all due honour? Or will you curiously watch for our party predilections? catch at our moral lessons as betrayed party dogmas? require us to conceal truth in order to avoid suspicion? or smile with an incredulity which will interpret our plain speaking as merely professional?

Whatever may be the public expectation ere our duty be done, or whatever may be the ultimate judgment of our hearers when that duty shall have been performed—whether they may award praise or censure—whether they may accuse of a morbid and puritanic patriotism, or applaud an in-

dependence of thought which rises above party considerations—I shall zealously endeavour to deal fairly by my text; and shall unreservedly lay its great principles alongside of our social habits. I pray you then to forget your party prepossessions and animosities, and to deal honestly by your sacred responsibilities. Remember, you are in the house of the King of kings, listening to his counsels, as far as he who addresses you, and who has no party feelings to express, may be able to detail them.

My text is like the occasion, and like the bible from which it has been selected, NATIONAL. The policy of the Abrahamic covenant, which contains the great mystery of the divine government, and under which both the Jewish and Christian dispensations have been deployed, is NATIONAL. Christian NATIONS, not christian SECTS, constitute the christian CHURCH. By the appointment of him whose face we are seeking in the day of our trouble, the inspired volume is addressed to both the rulers and the ruled, as under one evangelical compact; and under one great mediatorial prince, who has been made Head over all things. Individuals have an interest in that compact only as they are members of the great ecclesiastical WHOLE; while the moral principles, wrapped up in its glorious exterior, belong to all mankind. I thus pronounce to you a great scriptural fact which, I fear christian nations have in a great measure theoretically, and in a still greater measure practically, forgotten.

Politicians assume, that government is the result of an occurring necessity; when the disadvantages of every man's doing that which is right in his own eyes have become so apparent and oppressive, that organization is necessary for mutual protection and general comfort. They seem to think that God has given law only to individual conscience; and that he is not lord of the public mind; or that, while

individual character is formed and matured under the moulding power of political institutions, those institutions he has left to be framed by the philosophic wit of man; and has unwisely passed over this most powerful instrument of public education. They remember not that man was made officially, as well as personally, "the image of God"—that the first of christian apostles has said, "The powers that be are ordained of God"—and that Jehovah, in view of false political doctrines and conflicting forms of government, has proclaimed himself to be King of kings, and Lord of lords. Hence you find at the basis of their charters, or constitutions, or by whatever other name they may designate their deeds of association, various "figments" as the premises of their legal devisings and reasonings. So that, like Israel of old, when departed from the covenant of the Lord, our misnamed political confederacies are like so many dead, dry, and disjointed bones, where the Spirit of the Lord dwells not; and individual man is despoiled of his high training for glory.

If I am right, if the fact stated lets us into the secret of those many and deep troubles, the centre of which was discovered the other day when the funeral pall was thrown over your chair of state; then should those holy counsellors, whose it is to commune with the high Ruler of the world, call up the national mind to ponder the forgotten, but glorious truth. Then should these men of God, in his sacred name, require the community which he calls his own inheritance, to restore his covenant of love and life to their affection and confidence. And when all unite in prayer, their prayer should be that—The Spirit of the Lord should come among the slain; bring bone to his bone; lay on the flesh and the sinews; and, enveloping the whole with its own

transparent covering, make the political body an image of the great King.

In making these remarks, I pretend not to deny that, the forms of government among christian nations have been moulded by christian principles. How could it be otherwise? Christianity has thrown such a light over the world; her emblems have every where so visibly pourtrayed such startling truths, associated with such high hopes; and her ministers have, "by the foolishness of preaching," in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so clearly shown "the foolishness of God to be wiser than men, and the weakness of God to be stronger than men," that law-makers could not evade her claims. Idolatry has been quickly retired as too base and silly for Christendom. The dark ages, even in amalgamating gentilism with the beautiful code of the crucified Lord, could not extinguish the heavenly flame; but kings and emperors yielded to a mighty power, ruling in the temple, and wearing the robes of an ecclesiastical prince. Our own great men, who, under marked moral impulses, carried our revolution on to its glorious termination, and reaped a reward of everlasting renown for their moral worth, honourably owned their allegiance to the Lord of truth; and sought to consecrate liberty as a vestal virgin in his service.

While the heavens declare the glory of God, and the earth showeth forth his handy works; while the invisible things of him are so clearly seen by the things which are made, as to leave even the heathen without excuse; and while, in filling their hearts with food and gladness, the great I AM never left himself without a witness—how could politicians; how could infidels themselves, throw aside the master idea of God and his providence? Even idolaters thought their national interests and destinies to be under the protection of their presiding gods; and philosophers, who

appeared among them, smiling at the multiplied petty conceits of their false systems, yet sought for a purer conception of the ennobling idea. Socrates, Seneca, Plato, Cicero, a thousand others, have erected for themselves imperishable memorials on the hallowed spot, where the Everlasting One has laid the foundations of society; and have inscribed thereon the conclusions of their own gifted minds. And in later days, the proud Illuminati of Europe, who would have raised the goddess of reason to the Messiah's throne, only drenched their chambers and their streets in gore; made themselves a laughing stock to the world; and left a desolating spirit behind—a sad and bloody comment on their dogma of annihilation. The tale of the cross, the sorrows, the blood, and the triumphs of the martyrs, have enthroned on the ruins of polytheism the purer, the more intellectual system of Christianity? and the Spirit of the Lord is still bearing it onward, as promulgating a covenant for the redeemed people of the Most High, against whose holy empire the gates of hell shall never prevail. Politicians must needs give place to a moral power they could not control. They rather courted the agent of an influence so potent; and, corrupting its philosophy, like the puissant Constantine, they fabled a CROSS in the air, to cover a stratagem which selfishly sought their own aggrandisement. They put on the garb of the priesthood to deceive the hosts of the Lord; imitating their example "millions shaped the cross on their shoulder, rushed into excess and blood-guiltiness, and called it an accomplishment of the will of God;" and here we are to-day, mourning over judgments which have succeeded, and which so deeply confound, their wiltering policy.

I would to God they had been sincere, and honest, and honourable men. But, alas! how often have they appeared in public, covering their insane projects with the majestic

robe of christian principle; when in private they have poisoned the fountain of their own well-being amid the follies and blasphemies of bacchanalian orgies! How often have they secretly invaded the social influence of christianity by their example, when they dare not touch her doctrines in their public speeches:—like the philosophers of old, whom the historian describes as, "disguising a smile of contempt under the mask of devotion, without apprehending that either the mockery or the compliance would expose them to the resentment of any invisible, or as they conceived them, imaginary powers." Do you know these things? How can you confide in men, who do not honour the great God, but make his laws give place to party projects? And how can men of thought and intellectual power, who seal their profession at the table of the Lord, lend their aid to such combinations? For such things we are here to-day, to fast and mourn. And it belongs to me, distinctly and loudly to call upon you, to abandon the ruinous schismatic course; and to return to Jehovah as your nation's God.

There are none before me of atheistic pretensions. There cannot be. I would not insult my audience by a supposition, that any such hardened and foolish mortal would have forsaken his haunt of irresponsible vice, to appear where human beings worship Jehovah—no, not though stimulated by the most violent political phrenzy. You all believe there is a God—one living and eternal God—the creator and preserver of all things—distinguished by the noblest attributes, intellectual and moral—incapable of mistake—kindly throwing the light of his own mind into the bosom of the creature he formed in his image—unfolding his deep and wise purposes as he conducts that creature to brighter worlds—and giving a law for his action, wise, appropriate, and efficient. There is certainly nothing irrational—how should there be?—in

such acknowledgments of a believing mind. On the contrary, the immortal spirit that has gone the farthest and soared the highest, must have felt the most vivid impression, and have obtained the clearest evidence of so glorious a reality. Socrates might weep over the popular superstition of his age; but his disenthralled and enlightened thoughts would lead him nearer the throne of the one living and eternal God. The pressure of preconceived systems removed from his troubled spirit, that spirit rose to commune with the being who breathed it. How important that reality must needs be! The community which has lost it, or is incapable of perceiving it, lacks moral and intellectual vitality.

No forms of superstition, no refinements of mysticism, however ancient their originators, or eloquent their advocates, can supply appropriate moral impulses to wise political action; or purge the human conscience from dead or profitless works. The scriptures have said—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The man who is ruled thereby has a starting point for immortality—a moral centre around which all his powers may be seen in ceaseless action—a companionship which cheers him onward to a glorious destiny. He has an object of thought and love, of reverence and confidence, which, while he contemplates it, spreads a heavenly influence over all the forms of his being; and consecrates him as a ministering angel to guide the companions of his sorrow to an everlasting home. Such a man might rule in righteousness; and the Spirit of love, of power, and of a sound mind would guide his counsels, while exhibiting that CHARITY, which inspired men have described as the end and design of government. But it is surely—your own common sense cannot fail to perceive it—it is surely most unseemly, that human beings of his class should be ruled by the children of lust. Talk not of the talent of these sons of

folly—would you again attempt to raise the goddess of reason to Messiah's throne? Talk not of their apparent conformity to christian statutes—would you have the messengers of Satan transformed into angels of light, to reign over the inheritance of the Lord? By liberty you would not mean independence of the laws of the Most High, when you all know that it originally meant freedom from the control of such an unsanctified and superstitious despotism? and that it is the gift of the Son of God himself? The irreligious are not free—they are slaves—liberty belongs to that nation alone, whose God is the Lord.

The man of historical reading—I mean one who rises above the mechanical memory of mere naked facts, and scans with a philosophic eye, the progress and decline of empires—the man of historical reading might illustrate our theme, if he pleased, by a most appalling synopsis. He would tell you that *death*,—whose awful work, in taking away a great and good man from among us, has called us here today,—is the result of rebelling against the government of God—that government with which society began; and under whose penalty society still suffers. He would tell you that the flood,—whose memorials we have in the altered structure of the earth, and in the brilliant bow across the heavens, the emblem of a new experiment of society under a covenant of life, from the divine throne—was the result of breaking and despising the great social ordinances which Jehovah as king had appointed. He would tell you of the tower of Babel as the centre of a fearful confusion, when a descending God resented a new political apostacy, which gave the glory of the everlasting Lord to another, and his praise to a graven image. He would tell you of the call of Abraham, and the consecration of the chosen tribes, as a splendid effort of the Mighty One to recover his govern-

ment over the nations. He would tell you of the fearful doings of Abraham's God among the idols of Egypt, until Baal-Zephon, the last of that unhallowed tribe of human phantoms, gave place to the pillar of a cloud, and the pillar of fire—the guide of a holy NATION to their promised inheritance. Where would he stop? He might trace out the whole tragic story of human governments. And when he began to explain the political operations by which the moral views of society were corrupted, and society itself became degraded, he would have to refer you to the unenlightened ambition of politicians, as deep in lust as they were powerful in talent—men of might and renown, men of diplomatic skill and Ahithophel astuteness, men of great military prowess or of great ecclesiastical finesse.—Metamorphosed by the subtle agency of such "choice spirits," society lost her moral beauty and grandeur; groaned in anguish, or, as Paul has it, travailed in pain; and helplessly looked forward to the promised incarnation, and the "manifestation of the sons of God."

I would not have my country, I would not have christian nations, again to try the dread experiment of disowning the government of God over SOCIAL MAN. Alas! my prayer has come too late. The experiment has been tried already; as apostles foretold, a MAN OF SIN has assailed the inheritance of the Lord; and the sons of the resurrection and the life have been deceived and dishonored by his anti-christian policy. Read the history of the church. Take it as a whole, without indulging in sectarian recrimination; or arraying the priest against the prince, or the prince against the priest. Look at all together—kings and emperors in their bold and bloody marches—politicians and ministers of state in their secret committees and nightly conclaves—papal and protestant leaders of conflicting holy hosts—church

and state united—or, church and state separated, and our rulers talking of God and his providence like the lovers of natural religion, while they are ashamed of making one mediatorial allusion, lest a watchful community, trembling for their liberty, would call it sectarian. And is it sectarianism to name the Son of God in official communications? Then where has been the government—remember, the government I say—the political government, of the Father and the Son over christian NATIONS—over the American PEOPLE—amid all this turmoil of passion, these throes of ambition? Where is it now? Government we have—by a vast deal too much of it: governments we have—by a vast deal too many of them: laws, and codes of laws, we have in fearful abundance—too numerous and diversified for the world to contain them. But where is the government of the Father and the Son, which antichrist is said to deny? Seen only in the crippled influence of some misshapen institutions—lost or sported with in the passionate controversies of the day.

And what mean these endless and loud commotions? Men are seeking after liberty; and are unhappily, by mistake, rushing into licentiousness. What has produced this whirlwind form of action? Light has been shed—the film has been falling from the public eye—but as yet, we only "see men as trees walking." Where light is, God is. He is man's great teacher; and we must presume that his providence is working *now* in the best form the times will allow.

A new element has been introduced into our various associations; which, however indiscreetly applied, is yet the great element of God's government—and that is, CHARITY; without which, though we had the talents of angels, and the tongues of men, we cannot be saved from political ruin. War among christian nations seems to have been hushed;

the conflict of opinions and of passions appears to have succeeded the strife of arms; civilians, if indeed they may be, as they suppose, men of talent and forecast, must study afresh the grand science they have so feebly apprehended; and the sects are labouring in the delirium of a scorching and wasting fever, with more questions of policy to settle, and more projects of a protean benevolence to realise, than centuries would avail to effect; even if they were sane in their views, and vigorous in their health.

And what is to be the end? What can be the end?—Politicians in their helplessness will be obliged, as they do this day, to appeal to the King of saints for his mighty and wise and seasonable interposition; and ecclesiastics must cast away their party standards, and unite under the banner of the cross. The only alternative, if this course is not pursued, it seems to me is that, this tumultuous excitement, agitating all classes, will be like the burning mountain in the apocalypse, which, when cast into the sea, turned it into blood.—Happy is that nation whose God is the Lord.—Let Americans, whose revolution commenced these strange and uncontrollable movements, be the first to perceive and acknowledge the right of him to whom the government belongs.

There is a second view of our general subject, which deserves most serious consideration, if we mean honestly to meet the principle of this day's ceremony. The whole system of the divine government has been intended to sustain human integrity, as dictated and stimulated by human intelligence. All nature must harmonise with deeds of righteousness. Righteousness will exalt a NATION; sin will be a reproach to any PEOPLE. The presiding power must be willing and intelligent enough to direct such a moral *national* course. The Spirit of the Lord must be abroad,

where a *nation* enters such a field of moral enterprise.—Politicians cannot carry on such a lofty course of action. A thousand times have they corrupted the morals of society to accomplish their own ends. And the PEOPLE who depart from the Lord, and exchange their faith for a confidence in men of mere literature in any direction, "forsake the fountain of living waters, and hew out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." "Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord; for he shall be like an heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, and in a salt land, and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is; for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh; but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

Do you suppose that drunkenness, adultery, avarice, gambling and such like, can conduct a nation to greatness and renown? Can you concede, in a moment of serious reflection, however artful your reasoning, such a solecism in social morals? You cannot. It is impossible. For these, and such like things, which corrupt society in her best forms of action, the wrath of God—if he be what men of thought conceive him to be, and what the story of his providence reports him to have been—cometh upon the children of disobedience. No community can be happy or prosperous where such Satanic agents crowd her streets, or pass without the strongest personal rebuke. And will you arraign, and in bold infidel tones condemn, a heavenly administration which loathes and resents such affronts to every thing that is

majestic and pure? Are you prepared to call that divine government arbitrary and oppressive, which guards your fire-sides from the impurities of the licentious? and sympathises with parental anxieties in the nightly wail of disappointed hope? Such cavils can come from no man of reflection—from no heart that is pure. A depraved youth might thus seek to screen his improprieties; when a depraved community will suffer him, in their presence, to triumph in his own debasement. But men who have moral power to scan the interests of the life that now is, or have anticipated with enlightened and prospective view the issues of the life to come, would never suffer such flagrant observations to pass with impunity.

It may be a popular view of the divine administration, but certainly it is egregiously false, that it is arbitrary and unkind. Jehovah's rectoral character is, on the contrary, in the highest degree paternal. Would you have him to be unrighteous? and would you aver that, among his subjects, righteousness is impracticable—a mere figment, which no one, who knows what is in man, would ever expect him to carry out in practical detail? What would a patriot of reflection and experience call upon God to demand? Must he license sin in order to acquire a revenue of praise? as some corporations on earth have done to acquire a revenue in money. Or must the gracious forbearance of a pitying father, solicitously watching the development and growth of mind from the cradle to the grave, be misinterpreted as a frank admission that evangelic righteousness is impossible?

The mistakes of ministerial exegesis may have given rise to this false reasoning. The occult dogmas of metaphysical theology may have cramped our spiritual feelings, and prevented the ratiocinations of our faith. Thus the throne

of the Almighty may have been surrounded with the symbols of terror; and the mediatorial system, when mystified, may have failed to inspire us with the moral courage or the filial confidence, which are suitable to our anomalous condition, and commensurate with its own overtures. What a mournful spectacle to see a believer at the table of the Lord, or on the pillow of death, devoid of assurance, weeping and quailing with the cup of salvation in his trembling hands! or timidly lifted to his livid lips! O, what scenes my eye has witnessed, when human beings, falsely trained, having improvidently wasted their seasons of grace, have been walking in sorrow, or passing into eternity!

Yet God is our FATHER. We are his children. In our prayerful pursuit after righteousness, he gives his sanctifying Spirit and succeeds our efforts. He promises to fill the hungry and the thirsty. He wishes not our harm; but, with almost exhaustless forbearance, tries every kind and acceptable and soothing agency which can serve to conform us to his own bright image. He never chastises, but like a prudent vine-dresser he would lop off some useless branch; and make us more capable to bring forth the rich and fragrant fruits of righteousness. He never afflicts, but he would make us partakers of his own holiness. There is no temptation in which we may walk, however forbidding its character or disastrous its results, in which he would not be our sympathising companion. There is no thought of our mind which he would not elevate; no feeling of our heart which he would not purify; no affection of our bosom, which he would not spiritualise. O, how untrained believers have doubted, and captious objectors have abused, and men of talent and literature have failed to appreciate, the mind and heart of our heavenly Father!

In this rectoral course he has set an example to human government, and sketched out a schedule of political science, which all intelligent men should know how to value. A nation is but a larger family, of more numerous relations, and of greater social strength. In scriptural language, the terms FAMILY and NATION are often convertible; and the correlative epithets are all used in the extended communications of holy men of all ages. At first the family grew up into this political form, with no other constitutional elements.—The perversions which the ambitious projects of men of military power, or diplomatic skill, or luxurious living have entailed on our race, have created other modes and forms of government; the comparative excellence of which has been the subject of endless dispute. With these Jehovah has forborne; shaping his own providential course in such a manner, as to control for the time, and finally to correct their numerous evils. All along he has sought to preserve the paternal idea in full force. Rulers themselves have retained its expressive terms, but have lost its original simplicity; and, to justify their own rigorous proceedings, they have given forth false ideas of the government of God, as though that too were the mere expression of disturbed passions, and were founded on no liberal or kind principles. He appears under their representations as a relentless sovereign; availing himself of his high attributes and his mysterious movements, to sport with the interests and feelings and affections of his creatures. They have thought the manifestations he has made of himself to be the mere personification of physical force; and his Spirit, in all his varied actions, to be the invisible agency of an irresponsible power. His glory, in their interpretation, is but a selfish display, calculated to dazzle and confound; and, under their hard wrought but specious argument we have all grown distrust-

ful—faith itself has become a stupendous enigma, of which, the human mind, formed to believe, can have no conception but by a supernatural gift. The mediatorial idea, ages past have not been able to grasp. A legal spirit has been abroad every where, working out its own course of fearful devastation; enacting codes of most vindictive and sanguinary character; and shedding blood with demoniac profusion, without regard to the tears of the orphan, the wail of the widow, or the future destiny of the slain. And here, in this land of freedom, young, fair, and lovely in her form, where political sovereignty is predicated of the people, THE PEOPLE have but too often constituted themselves into a violent and unforgiving mob; while individually they have filled our journals with their deeds of bloody revenge.

And what notice will the Father of all take of such false politics? and of such encroachments on the fraternal laws he has given us? Formerly, he commanded Noah to build an ark; and, shutting him in, opened the windows of heaven, and broke up the fountains of the great deep, to punish the Titanic rebellion of the old world. On the plains of Shinar again he appeared, in judicial power to dethrone the idols whose low and false personifications were corrupting the human heart; and to confound the proceedings of official men, when counselling a new arrangement of political powers. On the sands of Egypt his stately steppings were recognized when he poured out a vial of wrath on the guilty race of Shepherd Kings, and saved "a remnant" for himself. He departed from the sacred spot where his name had been so long recorded, and called for the Roman eagles to prey upon his chosen inheritance. The time is wearing away; his purposes are fulfilling fast; the latter day is at hand, and shall soon be gone; and then the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth and all

her works shall be burned up; the heavens shall be wrapped together as a scroll, and shall depart with great noise; the dead shall be raised; every man shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body; the righteous shall go away into everlasting life, and the wicked into everlasting death. Principles must triumph over mere relations; and often the kindest parent, who would pray for a departing, and weep over a returning prodigal, can do nothing else than let him take his own course, bitterly to mourn in the end in shame, and rags, and famine. Read aright the signs of the times, I pray you. If you had duly honoured the Lord your God, you would not be this day mourning over past, and apprehending future calamities. Return unto the Lord your God; acknowledge his paternal sway, and imitate his paternal example. If he has torn, he will heal; if he has smitten, he will bind up.

Nor is the task we prescribe so very difficult, as you might suppose it to be. Our nation is yet in youthful vigour, when impressions may be easily made. Our government is yet fair in its form, and fresh in its influences. Your departed CHIEF, in his expiring moment, plaintively and solemnly called us back from scenes of hurtful excitement, to review again great constitutional principles; and bid us cherish them with all the ardour of a young and confiding patriotism. The pageant of the other day, which made its mournful appeal to our senses; and the temple service which this day assigns to us fasting and prayer, as an appropriate expression of heart-felt grief, carry our recollections back but a step or two—and then we hear the loud lament,—THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY IS NO MORE. Surely the appellation is familiar, and should quickly wake up in our hearts the tenderest associations, as though Jehovah had given in these latter days a new and brilliant image of him-

self as the Father of us all. Our republican simplicity would repudiate the aristocratic distinctions of mismanaged governments; and, basing our political ethics on the primary idea of social organization, viz: ALL ARE BRETHREN, would rather educate her children in virtuous principles, and unite them in honourable effort, than encourage a haste to be rich, or smile with pleasure over habits of luxury and vice. Man, intelligent man, man in the image of God, is the magnificent idea which our successful revolution has shadowed out for the consideration of the world. And this is the legitimate object of the government of God. Party spirit here should cease; it would but corrupt our institutions. The American eagle spreads her wings over a mighty people, who are mutually and morally pledged, to beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks. Return from the field of consuming strife, and range yourselves under the banner of the Prince of peace.

The introduction of sin into our world, and the manner in which it has shaped the circumstances of our earthly being, has affected nothing more deeply than it has political science. Men may designate the different departments of thought as they please; and may speak of theology, of philosophy, of jurisprudence, of general literature, in most enthusiastic strains; but SIN, which brings death and all our woes, has made sad inroads upon their speculations; and surrounded them with obstacles which they cannot surmount. A new moral centre, fixed by the great Governor of the world, is needed. Mere nature, in its original organization, will not avail. The required principles may be in nature; and the expedient which shall remedy an evil so awful and insinuating, may call for these principles as belonging to her structure; but politicians and ecclesias-

ties and philosophers have most lamentably demonstrated, that they cannot control the evil, even in the secondary forms which it has assumed in their own ages and countries. Who that ever thought, or reasoned, or read, would trust them on the wide field, where the primary recuperative principle is to be settled? Men who have so egregiously blundered in the common branches of science, and have distracted the world with their multiform conceits—how could they decide on the mighty matters of the world's rebellion? and arrange a mediation between heaven and earth? What an absurdity! The God of nature must himself speak. Revelation is the only relief. It must needs be so. And if that revelation be indeed given, it will bear the impression of its heavenly author upon itself. Politicians might not see the impression; philosophers might laugh at the pretension; and ecclesiastics might throw over it the many colored mantle of idolatrous superstition. They have treated nature so before; and why not repeat their folly? Do you know any thing about politicians, philosophers, and priests? If you do not, take care how you listen to them, when they talk about revelation. Revelation is strictly and necessarily POLITICAL. Thus our wise sceptics have not thought; but, setting christianity down as a mere matter of individual spiritualism, they have reserved these heights of moral power for their own ambition to climb. And if you desire to know the effective force they have put forth, let catholics and protestants and infidels all tell their own story. You must be strangely blind, if you do not see the wretched confusion. Have you courage to think and act far enough to get right?

Should Jehovah interfere, as the necessities of the case import he must have done, then earth must listen; or, the remedy slighted, society must rush again to ruin—ruin as

desolating as that, as when man fell by transgression from the pinnacle of his glory amid the bowers of Eden. Go and ponder antediluvian licentiousness; postdiluvian idolatries; the secrets of the dark ages; or the doings of sectarianism, which American freemen have so much admired. Then think of the reforms which infidels have counselled, on principles of supposed high elevation; such as literary acquisition—cultivated taste--philosophic propriety--freedom from superstition—ridicule of ecclesiastical follies.—These men, like Hume, have never carefully read the volumes of inspiration; like Voltaire, they have cried, "crush the wretch," and died in unutterable anguish; or, like Buonaparte, they could make a Pope a part of a pageant to grace their literary or military renown, and resort to the priest to soothe a dying hour. The real difficulty about christianity is, that it coincides with nature, and tells with unwelcome force on the conscience of all; notwithstanding theologians have told us it is *above*, and infidels have averred it is *contrary* to, nature. Yet, in spite of all, the foolishness of preaching has been the guardian of human liberties, and the guide of human hopes. Talk of the ministry of reconciliation as you may; and recite as long a catalogue of their official delinquencies as you can; yet, even when they were but the shadow of the professional imagery they were consecrated to present, they have been the emblems of high thoughts. A Luther or a Calvin could shake the world; and leave behind an impression which no politician could efface. With all the frivolities and contentions of the priesthood, disgraceful as I hold them to be, yet withdraw their commission; desecrate the altars where they minister; and dishonour the sabbatical seasons of their labours; and, with all your ideas of liberty, the nation would sink into a horde of banditti and robbers—to call for their slaughtered priests

when death appears; or, like the Danites, seize the first Levite as the pious mediator to cover their purposed wrongs; or, like the bowmen of the forest, secure some pliant friar to warrant their bold deeds. I have no faith in your rational unbelievers, who know as little about nature as they do about christianity; or, in your prudent calculators, who seem to think they do the community a service, when they would rob the clergy of an honourable support, and deprive the intellectual and spiritual labourer of his hire.

Oh, Christianity, my dear friends, has a tone about it which should charm the heart of every man, who is intelligent and pure; and under the mildness and grace of which, even the vilest sinner might cry for mercy, if he seriously intended to depart from iniquity. It speaks of the reconciliation of the human conscience with the God of glory; and calls for the love of man to his fellow. Such a view of social morals—you know it to be true, deny it who may—is the very essence of individual and social happiness. You can safely bid parents to teach it to their children; while nothing else can soothe, and the disregard of it deeply distresses, the dying:—as you would well know, if you saw what your ministers see, or heard what your ministers hear. And could you but induce your sanctuary preachers to present christianity on its own broad and glorious merits, instead of arguing the comparative claims of corrupting sects; or could you but induce your politicians to rate principle above office, and patriotism above the artifices of an election campaign, and the passions of an uninformed multitude; our noble country might thrive and flourish, as the paradise of the free. God in Christ is the mediatorial ruler of mankind; and is trying, on the American soil, an experiment of liberty, with which our politici-

ans are trifling in presumptuous and base style; because, like the throng who crucified him, they knew not the Lord of glory. Ah me! how painful it is, as you pass along the streets, to hear those who call themselves gentlemen, swearing in most profane and senseless phrase! and others, very likely their superiors in intelligence—for all professed gentlemen are not well educated—blaspheming the holy name of the Son of God! and even children, whose tender minds should never have been exposed to such a loathsome contagion, expressing in their rude gambols the unholy language of their domestic fireside, of the politician's circle, of the merchant's counting room, or the mechanic's shop! My facts and allusions are general. I wish they may be untrue. But, estimate my remarks as you may, the political system, which is not founded on mediatorial principles, will derange all our social interests; will cripple all our social energies; and will blight and blast our national glory. The Spirit of the Almighty is abroad, to convince the world of sin, because they have not believed on the Son of God.

But I may not dwell longer in general discussion. We must now turn to view the application of our principles to the circumstances of the occasion on which we are convened. Fasting has been recommended; and fasting is a mournful service, associated with a deep sense and candid confession of sin. It is a national fast, and therefore implies repentance for national sins. Prayer is the cry of want—would ask for pardon, for counsel, for protection, for blessing; and is based on a sacred purpose to do whatever is right. With great apparent unanimity you have responded to the official call; and if any have disapproved, they have thought it prudent and becoming to yield to the popular impulse. And what is your sin? What have you come to confess? in what direction are you about to ask for par-

don, and supplicate for grace to walk in holier and better counsels? Has a seeming judgment, coming in unexpectedly, and waking up afresh a subsiding excitement, brought you blindly to the altars? Or can you, with true moral sublimity, honestly look facts in the face, and humbly repent as in the sight of God? Shall your ministers play a pusillanimous part? and falter in the declaration of truth and righteousness? Will you follow them with a generous candour, while they trace a rapid outline of the social derelictions of the day, which you suppose divine Providence has so severely reproved? The proclamation has not marked out their course. No schedule of national delinquencies has been put into their hands. In mere politicians they cannot confide—the doings of such they cannot approve. They have been thrown upon their own responsibilities; and they must execute their task in a manner that will not tarnish their own consciences.

Hear then. The Lord has said to every living man, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And when he formed "THE NEW MAN in knowledge, righteousness, and the holiness of truth," he called the saints BRETHREN, and said—"a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." Has this commandment been obeyed? or has it been most shamefully violated? Let politicians speak. Let the halls of legislation speak. Let the courts of justice speak. Let the men of God, the world's instructors in moral science, speak. Let ecclesiastical assemblies speak. Let him, over whom the troubled nation weeps, speak.—Aye, let him speak. From the grave let him speak. Have not Americans sacrificed their brotherhood at the shrine of party Molochs? Have not professing christians forgotten their mediatorial covenant, put on their sectarian panoply, and defiled the banner of the cross amid their border con-

tests? Can a nation flourish in the midst of such fraternal disorders? In the day of action will there be any confidence? in the day of adversity will there be any sympathy? Will the young, under such training, give promise of future honours? or will they not, frowning at parental authority, and despising parental tears, hasten to haunts of vice where intellect withers under desolating passions, and conscience is stupified in a round of guilty pleasures?

And do you suppose such a scene of social extravagance to be patriotic? Are the busy and excited actors therein politicians?—Ah me! what does this nation understand by politics? Would they, under such an honourable but abused term, designate the struggles of the selfish,—sustained by the passions of the profane, the animal force of the uninformed, and the indiscretions of the young? Or are we to understand by politics, a profound science which men of elevated thinking should carefully study? whose details the wise and the firm should calmly execute? and over whose growing developments the prayerful should ask the Lord of glory to pour the light of day?—But these nightly processions, these noisy harangues, these contentious elections, these purchased votes, these immoral party pledges—O, does the exalted Son of God—who founded political science upon the philosophy of human nature, threw over its appropriate associations the reflection of his own attributes, and sealed the law of brotherly love in his blood—sanction such unfraternal detraction and discord? No, brethren, no. Idolatry, base and unintellectual as it is, might approve of such ebullitions of unsanctified passion; but idolatry would convert our glorious inheritance into a land of darkness and the shadow of death.

My questions have risen out of the recollection of late and stormy scenes. None here can have forgotten the un-

happy and extensive excitement of the past year. All classes of citizens seemed to have felt themselves called to a mighty effort. Our chief politicians, appealing to the general principles of social order, and professedly throwing back the national conscience on the elements of the revolution, pledged their sacred honour in the great movement; and called up human passions in unprecedented force. Congressional orators chattered about, and intrigued in view of, a forthcoming election; our merchants spoke in tones of unwonted despondency of times past, present, and to come; our mechanics loudly called for attention to the "working interest;" young men swore deep, with a deep cup of festive pleasure in their hands; and even children carried the badges and language of party strife into the school room. Who ever saw such times? Who, that is not delirious, would wish ever to see them again?

But the song of triumph has ceased; the language of complaint is heard no more; the funeral pageant has united under one banner of apparent sorrow, the misguided parties; and we fast to-day, appealing to the public conscience for a becoming confession of our folly. And surely there must be men enough, endued with political philosophy enough, and with prospective forecast enough, deeply to feel the severe judgment and its causes. If none else, yet the ministers of grace might abandon their ordinances of sectarian division, and set politicians a becoming example of moral order. They are commissioned to stand between the living and the dead. Death is their frequent theme; life is the matter of the holy promises they proclaim. They surely might be moved, when the noble heart of a tried patriot, who from his high station called for fraternal peace, ceased to beat; when an honourable and prayerful old man, carrying the bible into the mansion of state has

fallen—the victim of a general and protracted excitement, which his age and moral refinement could not endure. If these fail to do their duty, if they dare not, or will not call for union in the name of the Lord, then on a day of fasting the angel of judgment will write on our temple doors—Ichabod—the glory is departed.

If these ministerial men, instead of assailing party spirit in their Master's name, and in well measured though unequivocal terms, will still burnish their carnal weapons for a misnamed contest for the faith delivered to the saints; then, my fellow countrymen, listen to your own tried patriots, whom you have delighted to honor.—Washington taught American freemen no lesson of discord. His moral vision was too bright, and his heart was too guileless; his intellectual views were too philosophic, and his practice was dictated by a judgment too unerring, not to have warned us against such treason to the cause of liberty. He who, "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," could find a closet in his camp, whence to appeal to Jehovah in his country's behalf, would have fasted and wept over such social disorders. And Harrison—the lamented Harrison—with the baton of office in his hand, and the insignia of office around him, and therefore under the inspiring glow of his high responsibilities—whom you have lost at an hour when you thought you most needed an officer of distinguished moral characteristics—came with the mediatorial spirit upon him, to call you back to your fraternal covenant. Did party considerations rule him in his public addresses? or in his private walks? Read his official communications. Let some honest heart relate the anecdotes of his social intercourse. See him with the unfortunate sailor at his table; or dismissing him in familiar converse; and so kindly granting him the boon he

came so humbly to ask; and you have a revered example of MAN speaking to his fellow MAN. The arbitrary distinctions of a hollow fashion,—the offspring, not of moral worth, but of mere adventitious circumstances,—meet in that touching incident with a well merited rebuke. An example was then set, which multitudes might imitate with unspeakable credit to themselves—imitate, not as a selfish and impertinent condescension on an election day, but as the elegant and honourable habit of life. The poor man, American citizens, is your brother—a son of liberty, like yourselves.

For shame, Americans, that you, who are inviting the stranger from all nations to settle with you, promising him the liberty of sitting under his own vine and his own fig-tree, with none to make him ashamed or afraid; that you should be so quarrelsome among yourselves, and should so quickly naturalize him to take part in the disgraceful scene. For shame American christians, that you, who have talked so much about toleration, should spoil a political influence, elevated so immeasurably above your sectarian policy, by calling up the loathsome records of ages long since gone, as though they betokened the modern style of thought and action in a free land. Mourn before the Lord this day for such high-handed iniquities. Differ in opinion like men, until the age shall come, when He shall rule whose right it is; and pray him to direct that under-current of thought, which—perhaps you do not suspect that it is flowing—which you may disturb, but cannot control.

It has already been called up to your remembrance, that our departed Father carried the bible with him into the closet of his official and anxious labour. The incident is a pleasant reminiscence to all, unless to those who condemn a holy book they never read; or whose profound thoughts

they never had political solidity enough to comprehend. But the incident has been noted as peculiar. Alas, that it should be so! that statesmen should be strangers to a volume of political philosophy, which Jehovah, the nation's God, has given to his own inheritance! And this for no better reason than that, some literary infidel, of no broad moral views, may have scoffed! some priest of an ancient superstition may have pronounced a cathedral anathema on inquisitive laymen! or some self-sufficient metaphysician of a modern school may have, by ecclesiastical force, legalized absurdities from which reason recoiled! Statesmen, who can comprehend the broad outlines of political philosophy, may be readily justified for their rejection of improbable dogmas; but their exalted sphere called them to investigate for themselves, with a boldness and firmness that would cower to no sectarian control. They threw off that control, but they did it fretfully and sneeringly; and what else did they do? Did they lead others out to interpret political science on moral principles? They became literary without becoming moral; they smiled at an incomprehensible Trinity, and thought themselves free from the government of God; they searched the works of the great Creator, and discovered no rule for their own high responsibilities; they inveighed against contending sects, and merely changed their form; they laughed at the ease with which mankind could be duped, and never rose to the train of reasonings which were connected with their own immortality; they sported with the simplicity of the clergy, and were entrapped by the ministers of sensuality—the priest of Bacchus, or the syren voice of some meretricious Aphrodite, has carried many men, called statesmen, to a dishonoured grave.—And these are the men,—are they?—who talk about the bible in terms of reproach and ridicule. The bible—a book, whose polit-

ical philosophy, whose principles of national jurisprudence, and whose prospective views of society, are as far above their evanescent and faulty measures, as heaven is above the earth.

The generations which are coming will require a race of statesmen of loftier views, of nobler aims, and of purer morals. Where shall they be found? He, who could adopt the bible as his rule in the high duties of a magistracy over a free people, and who did not disdain to ask the God of nations to grant him the Spirit of his station, is gone. The bright image flitted for a moment before us, and has been suddenly removed to its kindred agents in a better home. Would to God that our statesmen would study the bible! and shape their measures by its transcendent rules! May the Spirit of Elijah, in double measure, rest on the successor of our departed chief—and, like Elisha, may he not fail to meet the just expectations of the mourning and troubled republic!

For the multiplied and conflicting misconceptions, for the reckless neglect of the nation's law, given by the nation's God, let the nation mourn, and be in heart-felt grief this day.

Sanctuary scenes, like biblical laws, are all important to the well-being of a free and intelligent people. Metaphorically, the nations are God's house; and our own nation is one of the many mansions in that house. The ordinances of grace which have been established therein, are the shechinah of his glorified Son—the visible emblems of mediatorial rule—the instrument by which the Holy Ghost puts forth his reforming influence. To the sanctuary of the nation's God should the people regularly, affectionately, and unanimously repair. The rulers, the statesmen of the land, the politicians of the day, all who are, or think themselves

to be, qualified to conduct the great social movements of the commonwealth, should be among the foremost to honour their exalted Prince in his house of prayer. There, in the tabernacles of the Lord, "the good President," as he was described on a funeral urn I saw in the late procession, reverentially appeared; and, in forms he considered appropriate, rendered befitting homage to the Mighty One, "by whom kings reign and princes decree justice." The example was greatly needed. But few of his political compeers, but few professional men of any class, save the ministry so called, thus devotionally bow before the Lord; and multitudes of the people follow the ill-timed example---as if the nations, with all their pretensions to wisdom, wealth, power, and liberty, were any thing more "than a drop of the bucket," compared with the Holy One. "The ways of Zion do mourn, because few come to her solemn feasts." And now death has called away the man, who had moral magnanimity enough, formally and devotionally to recognise the Majesty of Heaven, before the reputed mighty and great.—I honour his memory with delight. All men should honour the memory of the servant of the living God. Such an one, bold in his moral deportment, and faithful to the King of kings, is a true patriot.

The temple is the presence chamber of the nation's God. The symbols he there ordains are intended to give form and expression, to the wise and ignorant, of the great principles of his government. He himself is invisible; he has entered his rest, and dwells in light which no man can approach. These forms manifest his presence; they are the record of his NAME dwelling among us. The gods of the nations had analogous forms. Without them, these phantoms of human imagination would have lost the character they assumed; would have entirely disowned the mediatorial laws they cor-

rupted; and would have perished from the memory of their superstitious and ignorant admirers. Such manifestations are founded on the nature of man; are needful, are indispensable;---they wrap up the constitutional principles of society in vivid appeals to the human senses; and serve in their place the highest purpose,—analogous to that which sun, moon, and stars subserve to the universe at large.

Society cannot else be framed. Sectarian theologians have their own forms and ceremonies, marking their fancied differences with their brethren; and without these the sects would die---leaving the church on the extended plain, which, in a preceding part of this discourse, I have attempted to describe. Politicians have their forms, numerous, striking, and splendid; without these they could not act, nor give visibility to government; their party purposes could not be sustained in an electioneering campaign; nor could their grief have been expressed but by some such exhibition as was presented so lately in our city, calling out in attractive array so many associations, each with its own distinctive and mystic symbols. Government would die without form and ordinances. Monarchy, aristocracy, republicanism — all would tumble into chaotic confusion.

What then do our great and mighty and learned men mean, when they so recklessly dishonour the ordinances of Jehovah? Is it their wish that christianity should expire on our free soil? Would they join in as admirers of the wit and malignity of the French philosopher, and cry over again—"crush the wretch?"—To what do they object in the visibility of the christian church? The sabbath day proclaims the resurrection from the dead;—would they expel from the American mind the ennobling idea of life and immortality? Baptism is but the covenanted form of allegiance to him who is Head over all things;—would they in-

vite the nations, called by his name, to a crafty and traiterous assault on his throne? The table of the Lord is the memorial of a glorious scene, where "the sin of the world was taken away;" would they licentiously hold to their sin, and madly brave its consequences? the memorial of a pure moral character perfected in suffering,—would they blight the likeness of human nature, when, by high thought and hard conflict, it has become what it ought to be? The table of the Lord calls the church to a great national festival, and is the central point of national good-feeling;—would they destroy the bonds of a consecrated brotherhood, and lead the way to scenes of polluting lusts? When the event it shadows forth transpired, revolution after revolution followed; society put on new forms; the human mind acquired light and truth; the church sketched out, on elective principles, her own national domain; and the mighty influence which, starting from the cross of Calvary, thus began a noble work, and still sustains that work in its progress, will move firmly on till all the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. And shall such magnificent subjects demand no reflection from our wise men? What do they mean? They mean something, or they think not. Think not, and yet suppose themselves wise? Abandon the government of God, or refuse him worship, or study not his constitution of society, and call themselves politicians? Ah me! what a great thing a name must be! when it will cover from public gaze and reprobation such fearful absurdities!

Perhaps, men of such pretensions join in with the common-place apologies of others, who come neither faithfully nor seasonably to the house of God. The singing is not good, they say; and yet scientific music may not be the "melody of the heart;"—it may thrill in exquisite tones

upon the ear even of the profane, and yet have nothing to do with glorifying God.—Ministers pray and preach too long, they say; and yet men have deep and many wants—why tire they so soon in addressing that God who alone can supply their wants? They have momentous problems to solve, covering their interests both present and to come, both passing and everlasting—why shrink they from the responsibility and pressure of spiritual thinking?—There is a gross deficiency of talent in the pulpit, they say; and we are continually offended by feeble argument and tasteless eloquence. What self-complacency all these pleas betray! Yet how shamefully they dishonour the ordinances of God, which shadow forth the principles of his redeeming grace, and are the images of better things beyond the grave!

Is talent the primary matter to be sought? Shall we abuse the gospel, as men have abused political science? and must the worship of the Holy One be postponed for a question of human eloquence or the charm of sound, lest a fastidious taste should not be gratified? Is that worship to be measured by the ticking of the clock? and not by the craving demands of immortal spirits, seeking cultivation for a home in the skies? Are these objectors themselves men of talent? Are they sure that they can estimate talent, when it is acting before them? and particularly on subjects, in which they take little interest, and which they seldom study? Do they believe that ministers of the gospel have received a commission to address none but the wise and the learned? or have these objectors no sympathy with the poor and illiterate, when they appear before the Lord? Is it a fact, that the people are still addressed by illiterate fishermen? and that, as a class, the ministry will not compare with other professions? or are they so amazingly ignorant of the history of the world?

And our Rulers—did these but know—not under a human compact framing an artificial union of church and state, but under the mediatorial constitution given by the Son of God himself as our heavenly magistrate—that they are the official companions of these consecrated teachers; or that they are, by the temporary substitution of the elective for the hereditary principle, "the elders" of the Lord's people, they would not thus slight and abuse their own order. The Messiah is "a Priest on his throne;" and teachers and rulers are but the co-ordinate agents of his mediatorial administration. Had the church been what her Master designed her to have been, then a beautiful and sublime image of himself had been presented to the nations of the world. But over that image "the Man of sin" has thrown his own gorgeous mantle, bedecked with a thousand antichristian symbols; the official authority of "the Father and the Son" has been disowned in christendom herself; her citizens have been divided into the church and the world,—the first obeying divine authority by virtue of voluntary profession; and the last, not owning their allegiance, living as though they were unaccountable. How many of our politicians head the "the world" within the princely domain of the Son of God—within his chosen inheritance!

Perhaps many may think there is no talent in the bible, and no wisdom in christianity; or at least not enough to occupy a man of mind. And where will the man of mind find appropriate employment, if he finds it not in studying government as the great Lord has framed it? and expounding law as he has enacted it? Will he find it in the science of law and social order, as men have devised it? The talented men of the old world laugh at the blunders of our republican simplicity. The talented men of the new world, loathe the aristocratic notions, and abominate the overgrown

power of monarchical rules. Is this talent?—Talent indeed! Talent to counsel and instruct the Almighty! Such objectors do not think. Immortal mind finds its highest range of research in surveying the political movements of the great King; and realizes, that the living influences of the Holy Ghost will tax to the utmost all its powers.—However, when I read, or listen to, the manner in which sectarians and the missionaries of benevolence misapply scriptural texts and arguments, I do not wonder at objections to the bible—particularly when urged by politicians who never analyze its views; and by philosophers who are so proud of their superficial knowledge of nature's laws, as never to study it. But I must hasten on.

Your money concerns, if I may presume to touch them, have become, it matters not to me by what means, most awfully deranged. Your circulating medium is somehow most fearfully involved; and common honesty is every where drooping over the secondary, yet absorbing and ensnaring question of dollars and cents. A new fiscal agent had been summoned to the field of mammonic enterprise. A brief season passed, affording you an opportunity to look at the moral loveliness of his patriotic heart; and to listen to a few moral tones from lips which the inspiring glow of office had touched. When lo! the pen, which was tracing his views and emotions, was quickly snatched from his fingers by the angel of death; and he has gone to that being, whose "godhead is not like to silver and gold, graven by art and man's device." The perplexing question is thus returned upon you; and the reasonings and measures and failures of a few months may throw you into still deeper perplexity. Who can tell? There has been such reckless waste of moral character in this direction—so many men, who amazed us by their spec-

ulative projects, have fallen—so many of the children of guilty extravagance have worked out their own ruin—so many orphans weep over a crust—so many widows drop their burning tear upon a crumb—domestic discretion has been so thoughtlessly disregarded—political forecast is so much at fault—who, who can predict the next disaster? or forestall it by an appropriate and efficient remedy?

But the evil is not yet fully felt, or there would not be so many unqualified and conceited office-hunters, to court the fearful responsibility; nor so many partizan writers and orators ready, from mere party views, to urge them on to breast the storm—though they should perish under the first rolling surge. The times are portentous; and the remedial measures call for the deliberations of our wisest men. And what can they do? The laws of the nation's God have been broken; and, as he told us in his own expressive terms, we have "set our eyes on that which is not; for riches certainly make themselves wings, and they fly away as an eagle toward heaven." And now too, the heavens are black, the winds are cold, the grounds are soaked, and the heart of the husbandman begins to fail him:—and who appeals to the forgiving love of a holy Providence, that he may stretch his bow across the clouds, and yet give us fruitful fields and plenteous harvests?

The primary law of society, under the government of God, calls for *labour;* and turns our first thoughts to the agriculturalist, whose privilege it is to meet the God of nature in the well furrowed field. As society advances, the law of labour may modify its demands; but it cannot be repealed. The objects it embraces may be diversified; but the agency is still the same. You must not blame me for this general view; I cannot help it, and you cannot alter it. He who enacted the law, has distinctly noticed the

consequences of its violation, and told us beforehand,—they who hasten to be rich, pierce themselves through with many sorrows. The dangerous experiment has been tried, and the sorrows have come. Individuals have hasted to be rich, and you know in a thousand instances, what pecuniary and moral and domestic evils have followed. States have hasted to be rich, draining Europe to sustain their speculations; and how fearful the pressure! Labour has been thought disgraceful; and young men have desired to be gentlemen—rich, tawdry, and overbearing—as though the law of God was too oppressive for them. Lands have been bought and sold, not for cultivation, but to enable lovers of money to speculate to the disadvantage of their neighbours. Idlers have crowded our cities, and are helpless in the hour of trouble. Gamblers have decoyed and ruined the affectionate husband; gamblers have spoiled the glory of families, in seducing and demoralizing their first born son; and even on THIS DAY, are dishonouring their country and their God amid the vulgarities of the race-course. Benevolence has been deeply moved and pauperism has thrived under her fostering care. At one time, abundance has been abused by luxury and shameful waste; ---and at another, carriers and consumers have outnumbered producers, until provisions have risen, and Europe has been sought for grain as well as money. There is something more deeply wrong in the public mind, and in the public habits, than even in our financial disorders—enormous as these may have been. Surely, unless I have uttered an exaggerated story, there is cause enough for deep despondency. Our glorified Prince will not give up this noble country to the service of Mammon. He has interposed, and is calling us to holier movements, to a higher destiny.

What measure of relief is now to be devised? That is a question for others to settle. Politicians must correct political mistakes, when such exist. But if politicians will set aside the elemental laws of society as God has made them; if they cover speculators with their ægis, or offer a premium to speculation, the community will, sooner or later, curse them for their folly. They must act for themselves. It has ofttimes been seen that scenes and seasons have occurred, when politicians had better not have acted at all. Perhaps the present moment may afford them an opportunity for such prudence; and an intelligent community might say, "let us alone." I do not know. My opinion on such a subject, is perhaps, like a taper glimmering in a bursting storm; or like the evanescent sparkle of the glow worm, that cannot illume the darkness through which it passes;—but my country is not unlike the youth of high talent and splendid promise, who, foolishly overtaken in a moment of joyous festivity, reels and staggers in temporary helplessness; and may need more patience and endurance, than her children are willing to display. I wish other's may know what to do.

Yet it seems to me that, the diversified labour of our citizens, graced by a sufficient measure of common honesty to meet the demands of our creditors abroad and at home, would go far to relieve our difficulties; and, if persevered in, would make us an honourable and happy people forever afterwards. But no artificial rules of any form, either in church or state, can repair the breach of divine laws. Paul has said—I love to take refuge under the wing of an inspired apostle,—"the love of money is the root of all evil:"—"he that will not work, neither should he eat:"—"let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give

to him that needeth." The employment of all will bring happiness to all. A nation's labour will bring a nation's prosperity. Financial gambling will, conducted by any administration, and whatever may be its party title, bring ruin, sure and dreadful. This is political economy, in all its length and breadth, which any politician might have discovered by reading the ten commandments.

But political economy has given place to the love of money;—the philosophy of thought has been superseded by the excitement of passion;—party projects have trifled with the majesty of moral principle;—the love of show and of dress have called for the sacrifice of the domestic virtues;—and benevolence, imaginative and ingenious, leaving her churches in debt for thousands, and those who minister at the altar in penury or vexatious want, has created a race of paupers, whom, though foreigners in every well regulated society, she has naturalized with amazing promptness; and, by her poor rates and alms-houses, her societies and her fairs, her ministerial beggars coming from all denominations, and her immature projects of evangelic enterprise, has converted church and state into a public charity pageant. Money has been abused in all directions, and under every variety of form, without any regard to scriptural precedent or law. The fair demands of labour have been withheld; hundreds have been denied to the claims of justice; while thousands have been expended in the magnificent shows of eleemosynary folly.

Benevolence has been ignorantly seeking to shift the basis of our common virtues, from the force of implanted and established principles, to the power of some irregular social obligation;—a novel form, or a form suited to modern times, of a fatal IMPUTATION, in which men lose their proper sense of personal responsibility.—Marriage contracts are

often sought and made on mere pecuniary calculations; young men and young women, with parents thus immorally to advise them, at the expense of pure affection, seek after wealth,—that senseless god of the sensual, the ignorant, the indolent, and the proud. Unfitness of temper and discordance of view, bringing extravagance, discord, and domestic ruin, while moral worth seldom calls for a thought—ah! me, what is any noble purpose of an intellectual and immortal being, compared with money?—Money, money, is every thing in this land of liberty, liberality, and thought.—Justice has been dishonoured and enfeebled, when the wealthy transgressor of her laws has escaped her penalties; and she has sought to recover or assert her control by exaggerated charges against impoverished criminals—in ermined pomp betraying her unrighteous "respect of persons;" while charity, in gaudy attire and whining tone, has even graced the gallows with the triumphs of faith and the joys of salvation. Saving that which is right, we are, like Solomon, trying every thing under the sun; like him, as far as the experiment has gone, we have found every thing to be but "vanity and vexation of spirit." And like him, on such a day as this, if we would not that "our solemn meeting and appointed fast" be an "iniquity," which the nation's God will loathe and hate, we should have candour enough to give forth, in tones audible and distinct, this conclusion of the whole matter—"Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." This day, as I understood its object, was intended to afford an opportunity for such a review; to bring out, in the close of our argument, this very conclusion.

Had time permitted, I wished to have presented to you another general view, which I can now do little more than mention. Our intellectual troubles seem to have become as

great, as either our pecuniary or political difficulties. A spirit of inquiry has gone forth, which is reviewing every thing that belongs to our earthly being. The idea of liberty has long since passed mere political boundaries, and is associating itself with matters, which have heretofore been thought settled and sacred. The dogmas of past ages are unsatisfactory now; and are canvassed with startling boldness and unyielding perseverance. The current of public thought is not to be restrained, though men of truth and righteousness might wisely direct it to a good result. Questions of high import are rising up within every christian denomination; and church-men and politicians are discussing the same principles. The age is characterised by an unprecedented freedom and rapidity of thought; ideas thrown out by men of reflection are quickly incorporated with public sentiment; and the activity of mind is fiercely driven on by the strongest passions.

This state of things is styled, "the march of intellect;" a view which is often laughed at, because so much of what is seen is both superficial and evil. The secret spring which is moving the very foundations of society is not perceived; and the different actors are driving on, they know not where; leaving to the wise patriot and the intelligent christian no relief but in each one's saying and doing what is right as far as he knows, and appealing to the tender mercies of a presiding providence. The whole scene reminds me of a brief play acted before Charles V., which I read in my early years, and which was, if I remember right, to the following effect. A servant brought into the Emperor's room a bundle of sticks—some crooked and some straight. After he had retired, an individual, in appropriate dress, and labelled Erasmus, entered; and on discovering the sticks, he tried every effort to make them correspond with each

other. Failing in his experiment, he fretfully left the room. Another succeeded in the habit of a monk, with a chafing dish of live coals; perceiving the bundle, he threw his coals into the centre; and presently all were in a blaze. He was recognized as Luther. After his departure, a third entered, in the robes of an emperor; and, seeing the fire, he was confounded, and hastily drew his sword to scatter the little blazing pile; but the vent he gave only increased the flame. A fourth succeeded the disappointed emperor, and in the gorgeous garb of the pope. Grievously disturbed, he hastened to a table, on which were placed two bottles—one containing water, and the other oil. In his hurry he poured the oil instead of the water upon the burning bundle. The literary Leo ignorantly united with the rest to make matters worse.—This play is again in rehearsal in our own day.

A sparrow cannot fall to the ground without the permission of our heavenly Father; and such mighty revolutions cannot pass on without his guiding hand. He himself has spoken of such times—many running to and fro, seeking after knowledge—the Man of sin the Lord will destroy by the brightness of his coming—the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea—the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. The day is coming—the work has commenced—the different members of the Man of sin are palsied—and all are called back to the study of elemental principles. Cheerfully and harmoniously obey that call. You have been required to make confession of sin, and you have made it. You have been invited to prayer:—pray that the Lord may consecrate American liberty as the symbol of the world's redemption; and guide her sons and daughters in purity and truth to their own share of action

and glory, in fulfilling the high purposes of our exalted Prince. And when you pray, remember that all empires must perish, whatever may be their power, their wealth, or their liberty. Remember DEATH — remember DEATH. Your Chief Magistrate is NO MORE: his DEATH called you here to-day. Let his grave be the centre of your mournful thought, and give seasonable warning. Let rulers and teachers pray like DYING MEN, who would be prepared to meet the king of terrors when he shall come! And let politicians of all grades and of all parties be distinctly admonished, that DEATH will not wait upon their wishes and projects; but may surprise them amid the phrenzy of their unholy passions, and the madness of their unfraternal discord—to bear them to the bar of that righteous Lord, who is of "purer eyes" than to look on their immoralities but with "detestation and abhorence;"—and whose awful sentence their own enlightened consciences must forever approve. But I must be done.—And now,

May Jehovah, the God of our nation, bless us as his own chosen inheritance! May our country be carried on by his vigilant Providence to glory and renown! May he teach her senators wisdom, and her exactors righteousness! May her Chief Magistrate become the luminous and lovely image of Him, to whom every knee must bow, and every tongue must swear; ruling, not for his ELECT ones, but for all! and may all her official men be "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness!" May her "sons, in their youthful days, be as well grown plants;" and her "daughters as the carved corner stones in the structure of the temple!" And when her children are baptised "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," may the sacred affusion be the gracious emblem of the descending Spirit, come to abide in our land forever. Amen, and Amen.

ERRATA.

Page 16, line 12—13. For *observations* read *aberrations*.
Same page, line 30. For *prevented* read *perverted*.
Page 20, line 20. For *Your* read *Our*.

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